

PARABLE

OF THE

TEN VIRGINS

ADVENTIST

HERITAGE CENTER

James White Library

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

GOING FORTH TO MEET

THE BRIDEGROOM :

THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT :

THE MIDNIGHT CRY :

GOING OUT A SECOND TIME, &c.

By J. G. Sumner

CONCORD, N. H.:

PRINTED BY OLIVER HART, LOW'S BLOCK, MAIN STREET.

1854.

222

FIRST TESTIMONY.
Matt. 24: 15, 21. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand :) For then shall be great tribulation, &c.

Dan. 11: 31, 33. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.

And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.

12: 11, 12. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

THE GREAT TRIBULATION.

1260 YEARS. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.—Rev. 13: 5, 7.

1290 YEARS. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.—Daniel 12: 11.

1335 YEARS. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.—Daniel 12: 12, 13.

Matt. 24: 21, 22 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.



Matt. 24: 29. Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened and the moon not give her light.

Sun darkened
May 19, 1780.



Days were shortened 30 years.

1779

75 YEARS TO

THE END.

1809 45 years to the
END.

ABOMINATION SET UP A. D. 519.

PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.

MATTHEW XXV. CHAPTER.

Verse 1. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

"*Then,*" is an adverb of time, showing when the parable will have its fulfilment. By "*Kingdom of Heaven,*" is meant the Church; "*their lamps,*" the word of God. By the "*Bridegroom,*" is represented the Son of Man. The phrase, "*went forth to meet,*" shows an action on the part of the church, with the expectation of beholding their king.

Therefore, as "*ten virgins,*" at some certain time, did take their *literal lamps* and go forth to meet a certain *bridegroom*, so the church at the time designated by the adverb "*then,*" would take their Bibles, and anxiously expecting the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, in view of that event, would do all which they supposed the God of Heaven required of them to do at that time, to fully prepare them for an eternal union with their Lord.

But can the time when the church are to make such a move, be determined? I think it can. 1st. It could not be while the scriptures were in their "*sackcloth*" state; for the Bible would not then give a light sufficiently clear to enable them to take such a step.

2d. It could not be when the church was in the "*wilderness;*" for then she was not before the world, in an open or public position, but hid away "*from the face of the serpent.*" Surely they could not be so conspicuous then, as they must be, in going forth to meet the Lord.

3d. It could not be while the church were trodden "*under foot*" or while the "*war in heaven*" lasted; for the people of God could have no opportunity of attending to so important a work then.—

When they go forth to meet their king, it must be of course, in a time of comparative peace.

4th. Neither would the church "go forth," with the expectation of meeting their Lord, while the "*Man of Sin*" was sitting in the temple [church] of God; for Paul had declared that this must be accomplished before "*that day*" could come, and they understood it.

5th. Neither could the church "go forth," while the "*laws*" were in the hand of the horn with eyes and mouth; for the power symbolized by that horn would be opposed to any such work, and therefore would not allow it.

6th. It could not possibly have been before the signs had at least begun to appear; for the church would not be so inconsistent as to expect their Master before the signs that he gave them, by which they were to know when their redemption was nigh and their king at the door, had come to pass.

I think these reasons are sufficient to satisfy every unprejudiced mind, that the church would not and could not fulfil any part of this parable, until the "*dark ages*" were past—until their "*war*," being "*under foot*," and their "*wilderness*" state was past—until the "*great tribulation*" had ended. And then, as the signs were to commence their fulfilment "*immediately after the tribulation of those days*," (which was 1260 years long,) and as the length of time for the dominion of the horn with eyes and mouth, (being 1290,) would expire thirty years after the tribulation ended, and as the 1335 years running on seventy-five years beyond the end of the tribulation, and forty-five years beyond the dominion of the horn, reaches to the resurrection of the dead and the coming of Christ, the "*Bridegroom*;" I think that none can fail to see the place for its fulfilment, i. e., the place for the fulfilment of this parable.

Yes; here between the end of the tribulation (immediately after which the signs were to commence, when the church would be free and lift up their heads in view of their redemption being nigh,) and the end of the dominion of the horn and beast to hold times and laws; and the end of thirteen hundred and thirty-five years, where the church will actually meet the Bridegroom, is the only place where the church could possibly fulfil this parable, or any part of it.

Now the wilderness state, the treading under foot, the war in heaven, the great tribulation, &c. did all end before the darkening

of the sun. The sun was darkened May 19th, 1780, and this commences a series of signs of the Bridegroom's coming. How perfectly consistent is God's plan. How clear and plain his unerring word.

If the suffering people of God had been notified of the soon coming of their Lord and Master by the signs, when they were being trodden under foot, and while it was necessary that they should use their wings to keep from the face of the serpent, and while their lamps were in sackcloth; how impossible it would have been for them to have acted upon the truth, as the church always must. How impossible it would have been for them to have taken their Bibles and gone forth to meet the Saviour. How impossible it would have been for them to have lifted up their voices like a trumpet and warned the world, as the nature of the truth would have made it duty for them to do. But no, the tribulation must first have an end, the war in heaven must close, the treading down must be accomplished, the wearing out must cease, the wilderness state pass away, and the sackcloth be removed; and then would clearer light beam forth from the blessed lamp. Then would the weary little flock so long oppressed, be able to lift up their heads and look up, as the signs of their soon coming king appeared.—Then would the seal gradually be removed, which had so safely kept for many centuries of darkness, (while blood was flowing, and priests were ruling,) the sublime revelation of the TIME, when ISRAEL'S KING, in power and majesty shall commence his reign in all the earth. And when thirty years from the end of the tribulation state should pass away, and the judgment sit upon the horn with eyes and mouth, (which is the same as the beasts of Rev. 13th and 17th chapters,) and the king of the South pushes at the beast, and the king of the North comes against him like a whirl-wind, &c. to take away his dominion; and when his head is wounded and he goes into the bottomless pit, and the image of the beast, the "*Holy Alliance*," rises to take his place, granting free toleration; and the four angels hold the spirit of war, that there may be a time of general peace; *then* will the way be prepared, and the church will have sufficient light and evidences, to take her lamp and begin to go forth to meet the Bridegroom. How excellent are all the ways of the Lord.

The most of the readers of this little work, have probably seen or heard the arguments on the prophetic periods, which so clearly

demonstrates the fact that the Lord will come in 1854. Let us just look at a few points and see how completely that argument, and this view of the church going forth to meet the Bridegroom, harmonises. We shall also see a harmony of every part of the truth connected with this subject.

The argument on the periods makes the arrangement of the 1260, the 1290, and the 1335, like this. The three periods all commence together in the year 519. The shortest one, the 1260, measures the great tribulation of the church, their war, treading down, wilderness state, &c., and the sackcloth state of the Bible; and terminates in the year 1779, just 1260 from 519. The sun was to be darkened immediately after this period of time, which was fulfilled just as it should be to harmonize with the other parts, a few months after the days ended, on the 19th day of May, 1780. This makes it positive that this period, the 1260, had ended before that point of time. The next period, the 1290, which is 30 longer than the first, reaches down thirty years from 1779, and 1290 from 519; to 1809. The judgment sitting upon this horn, marks the termination of this period. The history of Napoleon Bonaparte and the Pope, and of Spain and England, at this time, (1809,) shows positively that the 1290 did end in that year.

"But the judgment shall sit."—The Almighty had decreed that Napoleon's power should rise no higher, and in that very year, notwithstanding he achieved great victories, he began to decline.

Let us look at the events of 1809 a few moments. England and Spain entered into a treaty, offensive and defensive, in January of that year. Here is the treaty taken from Alison's Hist. of Europe. It may be found on the 236 page of the "Explanation of the Prophetic Chart:"—

"The King of England shall assist to the utmost of his power the Spanish nation in their struggle against the tyranny and usurpation of France, and promises not to acknowledge any other king of Spain and the Indies than Ferdinand VII., his heirs, or such lawful successors as the Spanish nation shall acknowledge; and the Spanish government engages never in any case, to cede to France any part of the territories or possessions of the Spanish monarchy in any part of the world; and both the high contracting parties agree to make common cause against France, and not to make peace but by common consent."

Spain, assisted by England made the actual expenses of

the war cost Bonaparte 230,000,000 of francs, and over three hundred thousand men. Napoleon himself afterwards said "*it was that unhappy war in Spain which ruined me. The unfortunate war in Spain proved a real wound, the first cause of the misfortunes of France.*" Napoleon had, as he supposed, nearly conquered Spain, at the time when he left it in January 1809. He had succeeded in placing his brother Joseph on the throne at Madrid in 1808, and taken more than half of its territory, and supposed that his Generals would soon complete the conquest, but in this he was disappointed. The judgment set upon him in that year, 1809, and he that had conquered others, must now himself be conquered. Spain, "the king of the South," pushed at him; and at the time of the end too, which contributed not a little towards his overthrow.

England, "the king of the North," with her "*many ships*," (two hundred and forty of the line, and nearly eleven hundred vessels of all sizes,) came against Bonaparte, in 1809, "like a whirlwind." I will here give an extract from Alison's Hist. found on the 239th p. of the "Explanation of the prophetic Chart," which will give something of an idea of the strength and activity of the British navy in this memorable year; they were everywhere victorious on the seas:

"The forces by land and sea which she (England,) put forth in this year (1809,) were unparelled. With a fleet of two hundred and forty ships of the line, and nearly eleven hundred vessels of all sizes, she maintained the undisputed command of the waves; blockaded every hostile harbor in Europe; at once chased the Toulon squadron ashore at the mouth of the Rhone, burned the Brest fleet amid the shallows of Basque Roads, drove the Russian navy under the cannon of Cronstadt, and still found thirty-seven ships of the line wherewith to strike a redoubtable blow at the fleets in the Scheldt. With a hundred thousand regular troops, she maintained her immense colonial empire in every part of the world, and, as it suited her convenience, rooted out the French flag from their last trans-marine possessions: with one hundred and ninety thousand more, she swayed the sceptre of Hindostan, and kept in subjection her seventy millions of Asiatic subjects: with four hundred thousand regular and local militia, she amply provided for the safety of the British islands: while, with another hundred thousand gallant disposable soldiers, she carried on the war with unexampled vigor on the Continent of Europe; menaced at once Antwerp, Madrid, and Naples, and was, prevented only by the dilatory conduct of her general from carrying off in triumph thirty ships of the line from the Scheldt, and by the failure of the Spanish authorities to provide supplies, from chasing the imperial usurper from his palace at Mad-

rid. The Roman Empire never had such forces on foot; they exceeded those wielded by Napoleon in the zenith of his power."

I will not enter further into the details of the work of England upon France; all know that they claim the honor, if honor it can be called, of doing much in putting down Napoleon's power. God had said at the termination of "time, times and the dividing of time" or 1290 years "the judgment shall sit and they shall take away his dominion," &c. He had said "And at the time of the end" (and the time of the end in Daniel is marked by the termination of the 1290 years) "shall the king of the South push at him, and the king of the North shall come against him," &c. In 1809, the judgment set, and although sentence against an evil work is not always executed speedily, in this case, it was only about five years before the beast was wounded to death. The deadly wound the beast received then, has since, however, been healed.

One historian has said "Napoleon's power began to wane the moment he left Spain. It received another shock when he made the head of the Catholic world a prisoner. The next great crime and blunder was the divorcement of Josephine," (Napoleon Dynasty p. 171,) Bonaparte left Spain in January of 1809, the Pope was made a prisoner the next July, and Josephine was divorced in December of the same year. Is it not a little strange that so many things should happen as did in 1809, to cause his overthrow? No, it is not strange; the time had arrived for the *judgment to sit*, the 1290 years had expired, and their termination must be marked by the fulfilment of Jehovah's word which cannot fail.

Further on this eventful year, 1809, in relation to the difficulties of Bonaparte and the Pope. On the 17th of May, of that year, Bonaparte issued a decree annexing the Pope's dominions to the French Empire, thus stripping him of his temporal power. This decree went into effect on the 10th of June. On the 11th of June the Pope excommunicated Bonaparte from the Church of Rome. Between the 5th and 6th of July, the Pope was taken a prisoner.

As to the divorce of Josephine, there is something, not a little remarkable in her language to Bonaparte. "One evening when they were alone, she led her husband to the western window, and, singling out a bright star, said, "Do you see it, Bonaparte? It is mine; and remember that to my star and not to thine, sovereignty is decreed by Heaven. Separate our fates and

your star sinks forever!" He did "separate their fates," in 1809, and he did also loose his *all*, notwithstanding all his hopes and expectations; but a grand-son of Josephine is now *Emperor of France*. In speaking of the effect of the divorce, on pages 172 and 175 of the Napoleon Dynasty, the historian says:—

"A common impression prevails that the battle of Waterloo was the ruin of Napoleon; but it must be evident to all but superficial thinkers, that his ruin was worked by other and more powerful causes. While the judgment and sympathies of Europe were with him he was invincible. Emperors, kings and princes exhausted their treasure, and set millions of armed men in motion against him; but they had little to do with his final downfall. * * * *

From the hour he cast aside the gentle, the genial, the kind, and the inimitable Josephine—the Empress of the People—from that moment Napoleon lost the confidence to a great extent of the friends of liberty and progress, and the sympathies of the vindicators of mankind; and little was left of that mighty fabric of power except the heartless shadow. His Empire soon dwindled to a standing army, and bayonets and cannon he ought to have learned ere now, are feeble props to thrones that have nothing else to lean upon. It was then, and then only that the Allied Armies could contend successfully against him."

Bonaparte's life from 1809, was almost all blunders, mismanagement and misfortune. Heaven had decreed against him. Much has been preached and written upon the events of the year 1809, to which the reader is referred for further particulars.

But let us review a little. We shall very readily see according to the arrangement, that our 1335 years, which runs on forty-five years beyond the termination of the 1290, to the resurrection of the dead, will expire in 1854. But how do we find these last forty-five years are filled up? The judgment set upon the horn in 1809; they are about five years in taking away his dominion. This carries us down to 1814 or 1815. In 1815, after Napoleon's power was gone, the "image beast" [the Holy Alliance] rises, proposed by Russia, the "two horned beast." In a few years, this Alliance was firmly established. What comes next? Why, Wolfe of Asia, in 1820, begins to preach the speedy coming of the Lord to this earth. This proclamation was followed up by others of Europe, and at length about 1834, William Miller, of Low Hampton, N. Y., began to sound the alarm of the soon coming King. The message has probably had a greater effect in America than in any other part of the earth. The reason of this is, while the star of

empire moves West, so does also the power of the Gospel, and upon this principle we should expect the last harvest of the church would be in America. This also is the reason why the signs in the heavens, of Christ's coming, have been more conspicuous in America than on the Eastern hemisphere. In the last generation, the church will be principally found here.

The question now is, has the church under this proclamation gone forth to meet the bridegroom? It does appear, that the way for such a message was thoroughly prepared, both by the work which had been done upon the anti-christian governments of earth, which would give the church an opportunity to "go forth," and the appearance of the signs by which they knew their Saviour was coming, to stimulate them to 'go forth.' Also, the adverb of time '*then*,' does definitely refer to the preceding verses in the last part of the twenty-fourth chapter.

These days analagous to the days of Noah, are spoken of just preceding the coming of the Son of Man, and the two classes of servants are brought to view; one class giving meat in due season, giving the time of morning, who will receive a blessing at the coming of the Master. The other class, although professing to have the same faith as the first, say in their hearts my Lord delayeth his coming, and begin to smite their fellow servants, and thus act the part of the hypocrite, and therefore will have their portion with them. Most surely we have been passing through the scenes described in the last verses of this 24th chapter, as all will freely admit, and therefore the parable of the virgins must have been in progress of fulfilment.

For proof that the church went forth to meet the bridegroom under the proclamation before mentioned, as early as 1844, I subjoin the following extracts from the "*Supplement to the Advent Herald*," published in Boston, Dec. 4th, 1844, edited by Joshua V. Himes, Sylvester Bliss, and Apollos Hale:—

"We were not hasty in embracing our opinions. We believe that we were honest and sincere inquirers after truth. We obeyed our Savior's command to search the scriptures. We relied not upon our own wisdom; but we looked to God for guidance and direction, and endeavored to lay ourselves upon his altar, trusting that he would direct our footsteps aright. We examined all the arguments which were advanced against us, with a sincere desire to know the truth and be kept from error; but we must confess that the varied

and multiform positions of our opponents, only confirmed us in our views. We saw that whether we were right or wrong, our opponents *could not be right*; and they had no agreement among themselves. The arguments of each were so weak and puerile, that they were under the necessity of continually undoing what they had themselves done; and by their opposite and contradictory views they demonstrated, that however they might regard *our* opinions, they had no confidence in the opinions of each other. And, moreover, there was not a cardinal point in our whole position, in which we were not sustained by one or more of those who labored to disprove the immediate coming of the Lord. While we had the literal rendering of the scriptures to sustain us, our opponents endeavored in vain to prove that the scriptures are not to be understood literally, although every prophecy which has been fulfilled, has been so, in its most literally minute particular. While we had the opinions of the primitive church in its best and purest ages, to sustain our views of the millennium, our opponents were in vain endeavoring to support a theory not two hundred years old, and which is expressly contradicted by the most positive declarations of scripture. And while our principles of interpretation were in accordance with those of all the standard protestant commentators in the English and American churches, our opponents were drifting about in search of new principles, and respecting which they could not agree among themselves. The signs of the times were all in our favor; we were at the termination of all the historical prophecies; and we were occupying the period of time to which the fathers and the reformers looked, as that which would witness the consummation of the Christian's hope, and usher in eternal realities. Also the arguments used against us, were often most irrelevant to the question; and the greatest stress was often laid upon that, which, if true, would not materially affect it, and which at best was a mere supposition. Arguments were put forth with great assurance, which would have been equally valid the day before the flood, or before the destruction of Sodom; and which, if they proved anything, only proved the Lord could never come. Ridicule and contempt were heaped upon us by grave and reverend divines, which was only a farther assurance to us of the absence of all argument against us. And it was admitted that the principles of interpretation adopted by our standard commentators, are the *foundation of 'Millerism.'*

With such views of the question, we should have done violence to our own consciences, and been hypocrites before God, had we refrained from proclaiming to the world the time, as we believed, of the Advent of our Lord. We therefore determined to free our skirts from the blood of souls, by faithfully presenting to our fellow men the reasons of our hope, that we might by affectionate exhortations induce them to repent and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the Lord. In doing this, we had no sinister or selfish motives. We

sought no worldly honor or fame. We looked not for the praise of our fellow men. We labored not for this world's goods. We wished not to build up any party or sect; but we labored alone for the saving of souls.—And God blessed our labors. A few pennyless men, as unknown to fame as were the fishermen of Galilee, have, by the blessing of God, preached the tidings of his coming throughout all the land; and reformation has succeeded reformation, until thousands of souls have rejoiced in the forgiveness of their sins, hundreds of infidels have been converted, backsliders have been reclaimed, and Christians been made to rejoice in the coming Savior; while barrenness and leanness of soul has been the universal consequence of opposing the doctrine of the Lord's coming. But, to our utter surprise and astonishment, the great body of all the churches, instead of rejoicing that any could ever hope that the glorious Bridegroom might soon appear, united with the world in throwing obstacles in our way; and they endeavored to convince the scoffing and profane, that the judgment draweth not nigh, and to induce them to give no heed to our earnest exhortations to prepare for that event.

Thus we performed in the fear of God what we believed to be our bounden duty; and in the accomplishment of that work, we surmounted obstacles, which we could not have hoped to overcome unaided by Him who controls the universe. We then believed, and we believe now, that as far as we were faithful in preaching the definite year, [1843] we have the approval of God, and have been blessed in our own souls; and that we have been made instrumental of a blessing to others.” * * * *

It will be seen by these statements, which was the mind of the Advent body at that time, that there was sincerity, honesty and consistency on the part of those who were engaged in the movement of '43, and the blessing of God was upon them; while those who opposed that work were inconsistent and God sent them leanness of soul. What better evidence could we ask than this, that God was in that move, and that the people who were engaged in it under God met his approbation. This then was the church going forth to meet the Bridegroom. Those who opposed that work were opposing God, while those who honestly and heartily engaged in it, were approved of him. These writers had a good chance of knowing what the fruits of this doctrine was, and they were not alone, as they uttered these words; thousands of souls who had had experience in the work, could respond Amen, and Amen! These men put this forth to the world after the tenth of the seventh month, 1844, had passed, and had a chance to view the whole matter over up to

that time, and to me, it speaks volumes—"the Church went forth to meet the Bridegroom."

Again, these writers say, speaking of the passing of 1843:—

* * * * * "We frankly and fully admitted to the world that we were mistaken in the definite point to which we had looked with so much confidence. But while we were thus mistaken, we can see the hand of God in that matter. We can see that he has made use of that proclamation as an alarm to the world, and as a test to the church. It placed his people in an attitude of expectation. It called out those who were willing to suffer for his name's sake. It demonstrated to whom, the cry of the Lord's coming was tidings of great joy, and to whom it was an unwelcome sound in their ears. It has shown to the universe, who would welcome the Lord's return and who would reject him at his second, as the Jews did at his first advent. And we regard it as a step in the accomplishment of God's purposes, in this 'day of his preparation,' that he might lead forth a people, who should only seek the will of the Lord, that they might be prepared for his coming."

This extract is to the point, and if we credit the testimony of these writers, if they then did see what they say they did, my position is proved. Thousands saw the same things to be true which these writers did, and stood upon the same position, and thank heaven, some are there still. They believe a work was done there in its order and place. Yes, the Church, with strong expectation, "*went forth to meet the Bridegroom.*"

Again; these same writers, in speaking of the movement of the tenth day of the seventh month, 1844, say—

"Again we felt called upon to act in accordance with our faith; we could not refrain from again warning the world, and endeavoring to arouse the churches, so that as many as possible might be in readiness for the event. In this, however, we had very little to do, compared with what we might have done, had we commenced at an earlier day. The work had been extensively done; yet we did all we could, and embarrassed ourselves by expending our means in the spread of publications explanatory of that position. But the alarm was everywhere made; the cry was everywhere given. And again we can see that God was with us. It was a soul-purifying work; and the children of God bowed themselves in his presence and received blessings to their souls, unprecedented in the history of the Advent cause. And yet we are disappointed—the day passed away and we were still here. And those who only looked on, and passed by, were ready to exclaim that it was all a delusion; and that now of a certainty we must relinquish all our hopes, and abandon all our expectations.

We, however, do not thus feel. As great a paradox as it may be to our opponents, yet we can discern in it the leadings of God's providence; and when we are reviled and censured by those to whom the world look as the Gamaliels of our age, we feel that they are only speaking evil of the things they understand not. Those who have not been in this late movement, can appreciate nothing respecting it. And we regard it as another, and a more searching test, than the first proclamation of the time. It has searched Jerusalem as with candles; and it has purged out the old leaven. It has tested the hearts of all who heard it, and awakened a love for the Lord's appearing; or it has called forth a hatred, more or less perceivable, but known to God, of his coming. It has drawn a line, and awakened sensibilities, so that those who will examine their own hearts, may know on which side of it they would have been found, had the Lord then come—whether they would have exclaimed, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him and he will save us; or whether they would have called to the rocks and mountains to fall on them to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. God thus, as we believe, has tested his people, has tried their faith, has proved them, and seen whether they would shrink, in the hour of trial, from the position in which He might see fit to place them; and whether they would relinquish this world and rely with implicit confidence in the word of God. And we as much believe that we have done the will of God in thus sounding the alarm, as we believe that Jonah did when he entered into Ninevah a day's journey, and cried, saying, "yet forty days and Ninevah shall be overthrown." Ninevah was not then overthrown; nor has the Lord yet wrought deliverance in the earth, or the inhabitants of the world fallen. Was Jonah a false prophet when he preached the *time* of Ninevah's destruction? No; he had only preached the preaching that God had bid him. But God had said that "at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to pluck up and to pull down and to destroy it: if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil I thought to do unto them.—Jer. xviii. 7, 8. "So, the people of Ninevah believed God and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them, even to the least of them; and God saw their works that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them; and he did it not." The preaching of Jonah served as a test to the inhabitants of Ninevah, and accomplished God's purposes, as much as it would have done had the city perished. So we believe that this last cry has been a test; and that with our views of duty, we should as much have sinned against God, had we refrained from giving that message, as Jonah did when he "rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord;" that we should as much have sinned, had we refused to give heed to it, as the Ninevites would, in refusing to repent at his preaching;

and that all who are angry that we have preached a time which has not been realized, are as guilty as Jonah was, when he was angry and prayed the Lord to take his life from him, because God had spared that great city; and they may well ask themselves as God asked Jonah, "Dost thou well to be angry?" We thus have an instance on record where God has justified the preaching of *time*, although the event did not occur as predicted. And the men of Ninevah will rise up in the judgment against this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; but this generation have not repented.

We have also in the case of Abraham, when he withheld not his only son, an instance where God alone designed to try the faith of his servant. When he was commanded to get him to Mount Moriah, and to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering, it was his duty to obey God, to act in accordance with his belief. Had Abraham stopped to inquire if he might not after all be mistaken, he would have sinned; but, believing God, and accounting that he was able to raise him even from the dead, he laid his only son on the altar and stretched forth the knife in his hand to slay him. God thus having tested him and proved his faith, spared him the offering; "for," said God, "now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withholden thy son, thine only son from me." No one will say that Abraham was mistaken in believing that he was to slay his son; but God chose this very way to test his faith. Even so do we believe that God permitted the preaching of this last time for the same purpose respecting his children now, to test their faith. And we should have sinned none the less, had we desired in our hearts to delay the Lord's coming, than Abraham would, had he withheld his son. God has brought us to mount Moriah, and he will deliver us, or provide for us a lamb.

As every cry of land, when a ship is nearing the shore, is an indication of its nearness, although those cries are false; so the fact that God permits his people to indulge the expectation of his coming, is an indication that it draweth nigh. When God led the children of Israel out of Egypt, they had reason to expect they might sooner enter the promised land, than they were finally permitted to; but what was duty in view of such expectations? It was surely to act as though they believed they should enter, and thus to be in continual readiness for it. To have disbelieved they should enter, would have been to sin against God; and they were finally, after approaching the very borders of the land, sentenced to wander thirty-eight years longer in the wilderness than they would have done had it not been for their unbelief. In view of such examples in the word of God, we should do great violence to our views of truth, if, because we were disappointed in the event, we should deny that God was in the movement. We believe that He was in it, that he permitted it, and that wise ends will result from it."

I would to God, that this extract could be sounded in all the world, and especially in thunder tones to every Adventist on the earth. Comment is unnecessary.

Again; speaking of this same movement these writers say:—

“And should we not consider it as one of the most obvious purposes of Providence, in the late movement, to prepare us to meet the Lord? I do not see how God could have prepared us but by such an expectation of the event as we generally entertained. It brought us where we saw and felt the preparation that was necessary, just as a man sees the preparation he needs to make for death, by being placed upon what he regards without a doubt as his death-bed. Without regard to what any one might think or say of us, it led us to arrange our worldly affairs, to perform our last duties to the world and our friends, to confess and repent of our sins before God, to seek his pardoning mercy, and the sanctifying and sustaining influence of his grace, just as if we had known that we were to stand before God at the time to which we looked.

By the grace of God we were enabled to take our position, by the grace of God let us hold fast till the Lord shall come.

If there is any regret to be expressed, it belongs to those who have not taken this position. For if the Lord had come we should have been safe, as certainly as that he is to appear unto the “salvation of them that look for him;” while many of our opponents would as certainly have been lost, as that “*all liars* shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.”

If any have been overtaken in a fault—if they see now that they cannot approve, (or, rather that God cannot,) what they have done, let them seek to be restored “in the spirit of meekness;” but let them be careful that they do not commit a greater fault. If they had “burned their Bibles,” or denied the Lord that bought them; if they had been guilty of blasphemy, robbery or murder, they would have whereof to be ashamed, but we know of none whose case we should not rather assume by a hundred fold, than that of the scoffing and cavilling professed believer in Christ, or the truth-hating unbeliever. Let us then beware, lest in getting out of one snare of the devil, we run into another.

Again, we do not see how the world could have been fully and effectually tested on the subject, but by such an exhibition of our faith as this last movement has furnished. Heretofore, it is well known, the world have complained of an inconsistency between our faith and practice. They heard us profess to be looking for “the end of all things,” and they saw us about our worldly business very much as usual; and they charged us with being *hypocrites*. But now, God, in his providence, has brought us to the test as never before; our worldly neighbors have seen us leaving our fields, our merchandize, our work-shops, our various offices and pursuits of honor and profit; some even have freely devoted the last cent, and

what is the verdict of the world? Has this satisfied them either that our hopes are any more worthy of their regard, or ourselves more worthy of respect? Let the denunciations and clamors of the pulpits and presses of the land, and the responses of the mobs, which have even forbidden us the rights of all American citizens, answer! Like our Master we may say, "We have piped unto them and they have not danced, we have mourned unto them and they have not lamented!" So let it be! God is faithful! God is just! And "wisdom is justified of all her children."

Now I do not pretend to say that every position which Advent people took at that time, was correct, or that they were perfect in their faith. No, by no means; for I am satisfied that many things which they held in the '43 and '44 times was erroneous, and that the light on the scriptures had not all shone, and that knowledge was from that time to increase, as it has. But one thing I do know, that if Advent people, as a body, up to the seventh month of 1844, did not go through with something similar or "*like*" ten virgins taking their lamps and going forth to meet the Bridegroom, anxiously expecting him, they cannot escape the charge of HYPOCRISY. That they went through a likeness of the virgins movement, everybody knows, and as I have already shown, they done it at the right and only time that such a move could be made. If they were all hypocrites as they must have been if it did not fulfil the going forth in the parable, then of course, we are not upon the right track, for it is the people of God that are to fulfil the parable. But if only a part were hypocrites in that move and the rest sincere, this would only make it doubly sure that we are on the right track, for in verses 2, 3 and 4 we read:—

"And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

Doubtless, children, that so much of the parable was fulfilled in our movement up to 1844, and what have we had since? a further fulfilment of the parable of course, if we are right in the first part.

Verse 5. "While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."

Then those ten virgins did not meet the Bridegroom when they expected? no neither did the Advent people meet the Saviour when they expected. And while he has tarried to them, from the fact that they had fixed upon the time too early, they have all slumber-

ed and slept as the virgins did. If they had had no light on the subject they would not have fixed time at all—they would not have made any stir about the matter—and if they had had all the light, they certainly would not have fixed upon 1843 or 1844, for that was not the true time for him to come. They would have fixed upon 1854, which is the true time; for before 75 years from the darkening of the sun expires, it is beyond all possibility of a doubt that he will come. Seventy-five years from the darkening of the sun would end May 19th, 1855. Somewhere this side of that day, for it cannot run to it, the Lord will CERTAINLY come.

It was as much impossible for Advent people to be honest and keep out of that mistake, as it would be for them to make a new world. Here is the truth of the matter; they did have light, true light, that the Lord was coming soon. They did not have all the light upon the time of that event, but they had enough that was real light to awaken an interest, upon the sublime theme. At first, the interest was small; and it gradually increased for a time. At length, it spread far and near. The highest point to which it rose, was in the fall of 1844. Almost everybody remembers the Advent movement in the fall of '44. How many have supposed it was all a fiction, that there was nothing in it genuine. All such persons will find, when too late perhaps, that they have been deceived. The true wheat, was in that company; the genuine jewels, were there. They had some foundation too; it was not all fanaticism, and zeal without knowledge; no, a true light was shining from the scriptures, by which, the wayworn pilgrim saw that his redemption was nigh—that soon he would end this tedious night of gloom and death, for the glories of the new earth. Yes, true light was shining upon the *time* of the Lord's coming. Not all the light—not the definite point where he would appear; no, this had not been understood yet, although they thought that they understood it, they did not get the time definite. They had only seen from what true light did shine, that certainly the event would soon come; the signs, many of them, had appeared; the nations, had nearly finished their bloody history; a few steps more, and the bright dawn of endless day, would beam with all its glories.

Do any think it strange, that mortals, under all the circumstances, in a subject of the first magnitude as the coming of Christ certainly is; having a part of the light *on time*, which should illuminate

the path of the church in the time of the end, (the rest of it being withheld for wise purposes until the church should need it,) should make such a move.

John xvi. 12. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

The merciful and kind Master, had more instruction for his church upon the *time*, but it was not then due. What was due then, they had; and what would be due at a later period, was withheld; and the church not having had experience in this matter, with a part of the light only, "*went forth to meet the Bridegroom.*" Thus, a disappointment was inevitable. The master saw it would be so, and gave this parable for the consolation of the little flock, in their deep trials and disappointment. Who cannot see the wisdom of God in this matter. The Lord would not make a revelation, or cause the scriptures to be unfolded, or light to shine so as to keep the church from making such a mistake; but yet, did make provision for them in their mistake. He did not stop the boat from going over the falls, but made provision for all to be kept from drowning after they had got over, if they would press forward, instead of trying to wipe out the past. Some wish to get rid of the falls—are sorry they came over them, and all this; but I am glad we did come over the falls; we now know we are in the right river, and that it is but a little way to the port. We supposed we were coming into port, but it proved to be the great falls, which let us down into the tarrying time and slumbering and sleeping time; and we know that when the church is waked up by the cry of coming into port again, it will be the port indeed, and not another falls.

That we have been in the tarrying time, and the slumbering and sleeping time also since 1844, is very plain; so plain, I think it is not necessary for me to bring an argument to prove it, for all must admit it.

Verse 6. "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."

This verse teaches us that the virgins were not where they should be when the cry was made, notwithstanding they had once gone forth; there was a work still for them to do. Just so with the church, they were not prepared to meet the Lord while slumbering and sleeping; they must be waked up by a cry that the Lord is coming. And as any one can very readily see the cry that wakes

up the church from their slumbers, after they had gone forth and met with a disappointment, is the last message to prepare the household of faith to meet their judge;—it must be the “MIDNIGHT CRY.” What would make the Midnight Cry? I answer the remaining light which did not shine, when the church went forth the first time. A part of the light sent them forth to meet the Bridegroom, when for the want of the whole they made their mistake, and the remainder of it makes the “cry at midnight ‘Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.’”

Who makes the cry? The watchmen. Why do they make it? One says it is to get up a party; another says to get a name; another says to get something new; and a fourth says it is to make division; a fifth, it is to get money; and so it goes. But such things are nothing new, for the Devil always sets such reports on foot when he sees the light shining, and he always finds enough of that class, who say they are christians, and yet walk in darkness, who, according to John’s testimony are liars, and thus just fit for the Devil’s service. Poor souls, they feel bad; they are ashamed to be called the Devil’s servants, and thus put forth a great effort to make it appear that they are the children of God. Some sin has blinded their eyes: they are to be pitied. Let us then ask the question again. Why do the watchman make the cry? Because the good Lord by his Spirit guided his servants into the remaining truth on time, and caused an additional light to shine. Not by giving a new revelation on time, as many report, but by giving an understanding of that portion of his word upon which the mistake was made in the first place. This would correct the mistake and make all plain. For more than a year such a cry has been going, made from a correct understanding of the Scriptures, and especially the prophetic periods, as the facts in the case all demonstrate. (See the several works on those periods.) We have come down then, in the fulfilment of this parable, where the cry is sounding: “*Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him!*” and the church has been arising, and is still trimming the lamp, (the Bible,) and making preparations for their coming king.

Verse 8. “Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

9. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.”

This cry of the foolish is in the future. The cry that is *now* sounding, "*Behold he cometh,*" will yet be more definite than it is, as we draw nearer and nearer the event. When the wise virgins at length settle down on the true point of time, probably the foolish will fail to see it, and then will make the cry, "Give us of your oil." The foolish virgins are in the move of rising and trimming their lamps as well as the wise. If those who were in this work when they "went forth," constituted the church or kingdom of heaven, then certain it is that those who engage in this matter, and rise and trim their lamps under the "*cry at midnight*" will constitute the church or kingdom of heaven now, including both wise and foolish. The separation must come after they arise and trim their lamps. It does not necessarily follow that it must be the same persons who "*go out*" at last that "*went forth*" at first, but it is the same church. The same church that went into the "*wilderness*" came out of the "*wilderness,*" but not *one* of the same individuals. There is nothing in the parable that shows the door of mercy will be closed before the Lord comes. Still it may close a little before, but there is nothing in the parable to prove it.

While this parable is being fulfilled, there is the same opportunity for persons to unite with, or separate themselves from the church, that there is while any other parable or portion of Scripture is being fulfilled.

There will be foolish and wise from the commencement. Two classes down through, but not necessarily the same individuals. The foolish may become wise, or the wise foolish, that is, individuals of them may, but not the whole class, and while some may fall from the position of the wise and become foolish, others may leave the condition of the foolish and become wise. And while some may fall from the position of the wise, and others leave the ranks of the foolish, and withdraw from this matter altogether, so that they are neither wise nor foolish, and thus not recognized in the parable any way; and others fall by the enemy, death; there may be, as there has been, some coming in from the different sects around us, and from the world to fill their places. Thus, notwithstanding there may be a constant changing all the way through the fulfillment of the parable, still the two classes will be found from the commencement to the end. They will separate, however, just before the Master appears, when the foolish go after oil, and the wise

completely out to meet the Bridegroom, at the definite and true point of time.

Verse 9. "But the wise answered, saying, *Not so* ; lest there be not enough for us and you : but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came ; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage : and the door was shut.

11. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

12. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

When we come to the point where the foolish will ask for oil, it probably will be something like this, "Come," the foolish will say, "give us the reasons which you think proves that the Lord will come at such a time. Our faith has been very much shaken, and we cannot see how you make out that it will be at such a point, but from present appearances, it looks as though it might be as you say, and we want to hear upon this subject, and we want our neighbors to hear too. It does seem if we could have more labor in our place we should have a reformation. I do hope, brother, you will come and stir us up, and give us new light, for we are very dull, and feel alarmed about ourselves, and are afraid we shall be lost." Thus, notwithstanding they stand on the threshold of ruin, instead of humbly seeking God's favor with all their hearts for themselves, and making the entire sacrifice and consecration, that they may be made holy and pure, they are expecting, or desiring to have this important work done for them in some general revival and waking up. I would advise all to apply to God directly for themselves, in good earnest, and do it now, too ; for when the time comes, (which will be very soon,) for the foolish to make this request for oil, there will be more influences to operate against us than there is now. It will be a darker time with those who are not right. A fearful time indeed ! How much better to be thorough in making all right with God while he gives us an opportunity to do it. But what reply will the wise make to the foolish ? They will answer, We cannot do as you wish to have us, if we do we cannot attend to what is necessary that we should before he appears. We shall not be able to do what you would have us and also what we see is neces-

sary should be done, "*Lest there be not enough for us and you,*" says the child of light.

We cannot do as you would have us; no, "*not so.*" If we attempt to get up general revivals of religion now, if we enter into a labor to set this whole matter before you, to try and rouse you up to a preparation of this great event, we fear that we ourselves shall be shut out. The work which you call upon us to do was a good work in the season of it, and we have attended to it, and thank the Lord he did enable us to do so, but now we have another work to attend to. In a few days the king will arrive, and we must have all in readiness when he does come—we must be on the spot at the time. We would not miss of it for worlds. We cannot attend to your work, no "*Not so,*" lest we be too late; "*lest there be not enough for us and you.*" We fear we shall not have time after doing what you ask, to do what we must, to be ready. But there are men who feel it their duty to do still just what you ask us to do, "*Go ye rather to them.*" We cannot advise you to take such a course, but if you are determined to do it, you had better go to those who feel like doing as you desire, "*rather*" than we should do it and all perish together. ("*Not enough for us and you.*") "*Go ye rather to them that have to sell, and buy for yourselves.*"

There is no evidence that the wise suppose the foolish will be saved by going to buy oil. It does appear that whatever it is that the foolish ask of the wise might be granted, but it would peril their salvation if they did grant it. This cry of the foolish for oil, and the reply of the wise, I think is now (May 10th, 1854,) in the future. It will probably come this summer. O may we see to it now, that we are built upon the rock—that we have a good understanding of present truth—know for ourselves, and then we shall be prepared to act aright. We have now a favorable opportunity to get the truth, and do good. Brethren, let it not slip, but improve it.

What an important time we are living in! Was there ever a moment in the history of the church like this? No, never. The fountain for sin about to close, and the Mediator about to cease pleading.

The church are now rising and trimming their lamps and going out to meet the Bridegroom. The split in the ranks of the time people will soon come. The division is not made by the cry at

midnight, as some suppose, but it is made by the movement of the foolish virgins. "*Give us of your oil,*" says the foolish. "*Not so,*" replies the wise, and here they separate. The foolish will take one course, (*go to buy oil,*) and the wise another. While this is being done, the Lord comes, and they that are ready go in with him to the marriage and the DOOR IS SHUT.

And is this last move of the church so soon to come? And do they finish their history? Most assuredly it does. Then we have no time to loose. We have no time to labor in fields or shops; there is no reason why we should do so. We should spend all our time in searching the scriptures daily, to know the truth of those things which are fulfilling and coming to pass, and prepare ourselves for the great day, and try to pull others out of the fire. We ought *now, immediately, without delay,* to "sell that we have and give for alms." We have no further need of property now, only to carry us comfortably through till Jesus comes.

What we and our families need, our Heavenly Father is perfectly willing that we should have; more than that, I believe he would have us dispose of *according to his word.* Not to give to the rich. Not to give to those who do not need it; but only to those who do. We have no right to waste, destroy, or squander property, because the end is coming; but use it in the cause of God and give to the poor and him that needeth, for he that doeth it "lendeth to the Lord." Now is our time and only time. If this is not improved strictly for God's glory according to his word, *we are lost!*

It seems the foolish will at last, when it is too late, be willing to take the right position—to make the sacrifice. But O! how much better to foresee the evil, and hide ourselves. And has the Lord given us this parable as well as other portions of his word for our especial benefit in this trying time? Yes; and we ought to "walk by faith," and not wait until the events come to pass, before we get ready. This parable has had a definite and literal fulfilment thus far. There is but a step or two more to take, and shall we not now risk all and venture out to meet our blessed Saviour? Yes, we will. Adieu to the world; its pleasures, enjoyments, and prospects, for ever. We are going "out to meet the Bridegroom." Amen.

J. CUMMINGS.